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TETON FOLK-LORE.

BY REV. J. OWEN DORSEY.

From March to December, 1887, George Bushotter, a Teton or Lakota Indian, recorded 257 texts in his native dialect by request of the Director of the Bureau of Ethnology. The interlinear translations accompanying these texts were made, with few exceptions, by the writer. A partial list of these texts is given in Pilling's Bibliography of the Siouan Languages.

The writer has recently translated the material for the following paper from this Bushotter collection.

Among the tribes of the Siouan Family the word *wa-ná-ghi*, rendered "ghost" in this paper, means more than "apparition." The living man is supposed to have one, two, or more *wanaghi*, one of which after death remains at the grave and another goes to the place of the departed. The writer has been told that for many years no Dakota would consent to have his picture take lest one of his *wa-ná-ghi* should remain in the picture instead of going after death to the spirit land. The Tetons call the lock of hair cut from the forehead of the deceased and kept for some time by the parents the "ghost" or "shadow;" and till it is buried the deceased is supposed to retain his usual place in the household circle. When the writer was at the Kaw Agency, Indian Territory, in the winter of 1882, *Ho-sa-sa-ge* died. After the representatives of all the gente had assembled *Wa-kan-da*, the father-in-law of the deceased, removed the *wanaghe* and took it to his own house, weeping as he went.

Before the *Kan-ze* or *Kaws* went to surround a buffalo herd the crier proclaimed, "*Wa-djü'-ta wa'-na-xe ye'-ye ta-tce' a'-be da*." This may be translated thus: "It is said (by the higher powers?) that the ghosts of the animals shall be driven away." Whenever the Osages went to war they had a similar proclamation made concerning their foes, who were spoken of as animals.

The ghosts of the departed are not always visible to the living. Sometimes they are heard but not seen, though in the lodge with a mortal. Occasionally they become materialized, taking living

husbands or wives, eating, drinking, and smoking, just as if they were ordinary human beings.

Death and burial lore.—As ghosts visit the sick at night it is customary to drive them away by making a smoke from cedar wood or else cedar is laid outside the lodge. Sometimes a piece of cedar is fastened up at the smoke-hole. When they hear a ghost whistling some one leaves the lodge and fires a gun. Before death the lodge is surrounded by ghosts of deceased kindred that are visible to the dying person.

All the dead man's possessions are buried with him ; his body is dressed in good clothing. The favorite horse is decorated and saddled, and to this day various articles belonging to the deceased are fastened to him. The horse is shot and part of his tail is cut off and laid near the head of the burial scaffold, as it is thought that in such a case the ghost can ride the horse and use all the articles carried by that animal.

Why the Tetons stopped burying in the ground.—Long ago the people buried some men on a hill and then removed camp to another place. Many winters afterward a man visited this burial place, but all traces of the graves had disappeared. So many men came and dug far down into the hill. By and by one said, "A road lies here." So they dug in that direction and made a fire underground. And there they found a tunnel large enough for men to walk in by stooping, with many similar intersecting ones. They followed the main one and finally came to a place whither a strange animal, the Wakhanksicha, had dragged the corpses. For this reason the Lakotas became unwilling to lay their dead in the ground, so they began to bury on scaffolds which could not be reached by beasts of prey. At the present day the Tetons give three reasons for not burying in the ground : 1. Animals or persons might walk over the graves. 2. The dead might lie in mud and water after rain or snow. 3. Wolves might dig up the bodies and devour them.

In order that the ghost may travel the ghost-road in safety it is necessary for each Lakota during his life to be tattooed either in the middle of the forehead or on the wrists. In that event his spirit will go directly to the "Many Lodges." The other spirit road is said to be short, and the foolish one who travels it never reaches the "Many Lodges." An old woman sits in the road and

she examines each ghost that passes. If she cannot find the tattoo marks on the forehead, wrists, or chin the unhappy ghost is pushed from a cloud or cliff and falls to this world. Such is the lot of the ghosts that wander o'er the earth. They can never travel the spirit road again, so they go about whistling, with no fixed abode.

If a quiet and well-behaved person dies his ghost is apt to be restless and cause trouble, but the ghost of a bad person who dies a natural death is never feared. The ghost of a murdered person is always dangerous.

If a ghost calls to a loved one and the latter answers, he or she is sure to die soon after. If some one is heard weeping outside of a lodge, it is a sign that a person dwelling in that lodge is doomed to die. If a sister dies, she has a strong desire to return and carry off a beloved brother. So in event of a death in the family a gun, is fired or medicine is thrown on a fire to raise a smoke. If one who is alone encounters a ghost, the latter will be apt to pull his mouth and eyes until they are crooked. Mothers scare bad children by saying: "Well, wait a bit and I will tell a ghost to come and carry you off." Some one who has dreamed of ghosts will draw one on a skin, etc., to frighten the children. Such a person is said to draw his own ghost just as he will appear in future. No one else dares to draw a ghost.

Ceremonies at the ghost-lodge.—When a son dies the parents with a knife cut off some hair from the top of the head, just above the forehead, placing the hair in a deerskin cover. Then they set up three poles, fastened together at the top and forming a sort of tripod. A cord hung over the top of these holds up the white deerskin pack containing the hair of the deceased. This hair is called the ghost or shade (or wa-na-ghi) of the dead person. The deerskin pack hangs horizontally from the poles and the skin is worked with porcupine quills in many lines, and here and there are various kinds of red and blue circular figures sewed on it. All the sod has been cut away from the ground beneath the pack, and on this bare or virgin earth they put a bowl and a drinking vessel, each ornamented with porcupine work. Three times a day do they remember the ghost, for whom they put the choicest food in the bowl and water in the drinking vessel. Every article is handled carefully, being exposed to the smoke of sweet-smelling herbs. The

pack said to contain the ghost is put in the ghost-lodge with the knife which he used during life.

The Indians always have observed the custom of smoking pipes and eating while sitting in the ghost-lodge. At the back of the lodge they prepare a seat and in the middle they set up two poles similar to those erected outside the entrance to the tents. Before they eat in the lodge, they sacrifice part of the food. Whenever they move the camp or single tent from one place to another, all these sacred objects are packed, and carried on a horse kept for this special purpose. This horse has his tail and mane cut off short, the hair on the body is shaved very close; his body is rubbed all over with yellow clay. Some one then rubs paint on the fingers, touching the rump gently several times, as well as the forehead and around the neck and breast. A feather is tied to the end of the tail. On his back they place a saddle-cloth and a saddle, each ornamented with porcupine quills. The horse must mourn—*i. e.*, keep his hair short—as long as the ghost remains unburied; but as soon as the hair is removed from the pack and buried, the horse's hair is allowed to grow long again. As soon as the people stop to encamp, the ghost-lodge is set up before any of the others. The articles which are kept there remain for a specified time, perhaps for several years, during which period certain ceremonies are performed. At the end of the allotted time comes the ghost feast, the Waéchünpi or Wakichaghápi, when the ghost pack is opened and the ghost taken out and buried. Then all the people assemble, setting up their tents near the ghost-lodge. The kindred of the deceased weep and bring food to the place. All this food has been boiled. They set up in the ground some forked sticks, such as are used for digging wild turnips, and straight poles are laid along the forked sticks. On the poles are hung moccasins and in the space between the forked sticks are piled blankets, buffalo robes, calico, untanned skin-bags, tanned bags, porcupine quills, wild turnips, and fruits.* These are distributed by women, and the people spend the time pleasantly. They also give presents to the young women. If the deceased was a male and a member of an order of young men, all who belong to it are invited to a feast (there was a similar custom among the Ponkas, in 1872), where they sing songs. When they

* These things are probably given by the kindred of the deceased, but Bushotter has not so informed us.

stop singing they sit with bodies erect, but with bent head and stooping shoulders. Then the parents of the dead youth enter the lodge, weeping as they pass around the circle, and each one places both hands on the head of each guest, because the son, who regarded the men as his friends, is no longer present. If the deceased is a female, only the women assemble, except some men, who lead the singing. If horses take part in the ceremonies, their manes and tails are shaved short, and they, too, receive gifts. Here and there one of the kindred of the deceased gives away all his property, and then the bag is opened and the hair or ghost is taken out and buried. From this time the parting with his parents is absolute. They think that until the hair is buried, the deceased is really present with the household, and that when this burial takes place he dies a second time. After this burial the kindred put on their usual clothing, and while they weep for the dead at intervals they are at liberty to anoint and decorate themselves according to fancy.

Another account of Bushotter states that when they prepare for the ghost feast they redden the sack containing the hair and hang the war bonnet of feathers on the three poles at right angles with the ghost sack. They wish to remember his deeds in war, so they also stick one end of his war spear in the ground, with its top leaning against the tops of the three poles. His shield is suspended from one of the poles. The three pipes on the shield in a colored sketch prepared by Bushotter denote that on so many expeditions he carried a war pipe. The red stripes declare how many of the enemy were wounded by him, and the human heads show the number of foes that he killed. The half-moon means that he shouted at his foes on a certain night. Once he threw aside his arms and engaged in a hand-to-hand struggle with a foe; this is shown by the human hand. The horse-tracks indicate that he ran off with so many horses. If his name was Black Hawk, for instance, a black hawk was painted in the middle of his shield.

All these things are arranged before they open the bag containing the hair. Then they enter the lodge, and there they open all the things that they have brought. The kindred of the deceased are the only ones to enter the lodge, and when they see the hair taken from the sack they scream suddenly for a minute or two. It is at this time that they distribute the gifts. Food has been boiled in many kettles, and is now divided among the people not the kindred of the deceased, who are scattered around the ghost-

lodge, and some food is usually given to the young men of the order to which the deceased belonged.

A woman who attends to collecting the food, calico, bags, clothing, etc., turns to the four posts of the scaffold in succession, and utters one of the following sayings or prayers at each post: "If the ghosts eat this, may I live long!" or "May the ghosts eat this, and I obtain many horses!" or "If my nephew (*or* niece) eats this, may some one give me many presents!" This woman is careful to put the best part of the food on the bowl or dish under the scaffold near the head of the corpse.* Should any one eat before the food has been put aside for the ghost, all the ghosts become angry with him, and they are sure to punish him; they will make him drop his food just before it reaches his mouth, or they will spill the water when he tries to drink, and sometimes they cause a man to gash himself with a knife.

A few ghost stories of the Teton collection will now be given.

The Ghost Husband.—A young Lakota died just before marrying a young girl whom he loved. The girl mourned his death, so she cut her hair here and there with a dull knife, and gashed her limbs, just as if she had been an old woman. The ghost returned and took her for his wife. Whenever the tribe camped for the night the ghost's wife pitched her tent at some distance from the others, and when the people removed their camp the woman and her husband kept some distance behind the main body. The ghost always told the woman what to do; and he brought game to her regularly, which the wife gave to the people in exchange for other articles. The people could neither see nor hear the ghost, but they heard his wife address him. He always sent word to the tribe when there was to be a high wind or heavy rain. He could read the thoughts of his wife, so that she need not speak a word to him, and when she felt a desire for anything he soon obtained it for her.

The Solitary Traveler.—Once a solitary traveler was overtaken by a tremendous thunderstorm near a forest. So he remained there for the night. After dark he noticed a light in the woods, and when he reached the spot, behold, there was a sweat lodge, in which were two persons talking. One said, "Friend, some one has come

* In one of his papers Bushotter says that it is the mother of the deceased person who deposits the food under the scaffold and utters the prayers.

and stands without. Let us invite him to share our food." The listener fled suddenly, as they were ghosts, and they pursued him. Though he looked behind now and then, he could not see them; so he ran with all his might towards a hill, and escaped from them. As he was ascending a divide of the Bad Lands, all at once he heard the cry of a woman. He was very glad to have company for the rest of the journey; but no sooner had he thought about the woman than she appeared by his side, saying, "I have come because you have just wished to have my company." This frightened the man, but the ghost woman said, "Do not fear me, else you will never see me again." So they went on silently till daybreak. Then the man looked at her, but her legs could not be seen, though she was walking without any apparent effort. Then the man thought, "What if she should choke me?" Immediately the woman disappeared like the wind.

The Ghost on the Hill.—One day, when the people were hunting the buffalo, a strange man appeared on a hill. He wore a winter robe, with the hair outside. When he was descending the hill the people became alarmed, but he continued to advance. The young men rushed to meet him, taking bows and arrows. They could not see his face. They tried to shoot him, but each arrow passed by him on one side or the other. So they finally fled, as he was a ghost.

The Indian who wrestled with a Ghost.—A young man went alone on the war path. At length he reached a wilderness, encountering many difficulties, which did not deter him from his undertaking. One day, as he was going along, he heard a voice, and he thought, "I shall have company." As he was approaching a forest he heard some one halloo. Behold, it was an owl. By and by he drew near another forest, and as night was coming on he had to rest there. At the edge of the forest he lay down in the open air. At midnight he was aroused by the voice of a woman, who was wailing, "My son! my son!" Still he remained where he was, and continued putting wood on the fire. He lay with his back to the fire, placing his flint lock gun in readiness before him. He tore a hole in his blanket large enough to peep through.

Soon he heard the twigs break under the feet of one approaching, so he peeped without rising. Behold, a woman of the olden days was coming. She wore a skin dress with long fringe. A buffalo

robe was fastened around her at the waist. Her necklace was composed of very large beads, and her leggins were covered with beads or porcupine work. Her robe was drawn over her head, and she was snuffling as she came. The man lay with his legs stretched out, and she stood by him. She took him by one foot, which she raised very slowly. When she let it go it fell with a thud, as if he was dead. She raised it a second and third time. Still the man did not move himself. Then the woman pulled a very rusty knife from the front of her belt, seized his foot suddenly, and was apparently about to lift it and gash it, when up sprang the man, saying, "What are you doing?" Without waiting for a reply he shot at her suddenly, and away she went, screaming "Yun! yun! yun! yun! yun! yun!" Then she plunged into the forest and was seen no more.

Once again the man covered his head with his blanket, but he did not sleep. When day came he raised his eyes, and, behold, he saw a human burial scaffold, with the blankets, etc., ragged and dangling. He thought, "Is this the ghost that came to me." On another occasion he came to a forest where he had to remain for the night. He started a fire, by which he sat. Suddenly he heard some one making the woods ring as he sang. The man shouted to the singer, but the latter paid no attention to him. The man had a small quantity of wasna (grease mixed with pounded dried buffalo meat and wild cherries) and plenty of tobacco. So when the singer, who was a male ghost, came to him and asked him for food, the man replied, "I have nothing whatever;" but the ghost said, "Not so; I know that you have some wasna." Then the man gave some of it to the ghost and filled the pipe for him. After the meal, when the ghost took the pipe and held it by the stem, the man saw that his hand had no flesh, being nothing but bones. As the ghost's robe had dropped from his shoulders to his waist all his ribs were visible, there being no flesh on them. Though the ghost did not open his lips as he smoked, the smoke was pouring out through his ribs. When he finished smoking the ghost said to the man, "Ho! we must wrestle together. If you can throw me, you shall kill a foe without hindrance, and steal some horses." The young man agreed to the proposition; but before beginning he gathered plenty of brush around the fire, on which he put an armful. Then the ghost rushed at the man, seizing him with his bony hands, which pained the man; but this mattered not. He tried to push off the ghost, whose legs were very powerful. When the ghost was brought near the fire, he

became weak, but when he managed to pull the man towards the darkness he became very strong. As the fire got low, the strength of the ghost increased. Just as the man began to grow weary, the day broke. Then the struggle was renewed. As they drew near the fire the man made a desperate effort, and with his foot he pushed a firebrand suddenly into the fire. As the fire blazed again, the ghost fell just as if he was coming to pieces. So the man won, and the ghost's prophecy was fulfilled. Therefore from that time the people have believed whatever the ghosts have said.

The Man who Shot a Ghost.—In the olden time a man was traveling alone, and in a forest he killed several rabbits. After sunset he was in the midst of the forest, so he made a fire, as he had to spend the night there. He thought thus: "Should I encounter any danger by and by, I have this gun, and I am a man who ought not to regard anything." He cooked a rabbit and satisfied his hunger. Just then he heard many voices, and they were talking about their own affairs, but he could see nothing. So he thought, "It seems that now at length I have encountered ghosts." Then he went and lay under a fallen tree, which was a great distance from the fire. He loaded his gun with powder only, as he knew by this time that they were really ghosts. They came round about him and whistled, "Hyu, hyu, hyu." "He has gone yonder," said one. They came and stood around, just as people do when they hunt rabbits. The man lay flat beneath the fallen tree, and one ghost came and climbed on the body of the tree. Suddenly the ghost gave the cry uttered on hitting a foe, "Aⁿ-he!" and then kicked the man on the back, but before the ghost could get away the man shot at him and wounded him in the leg; so the ghost gave the male cry of pain, "Au! au! au!" and finally he went off crying as females do, "Yun! yun! yun!" And the other ghosts said to him: "Where did he shoot?" And the wounded ghost said: "He shot me through the head, and I have come apart." Then the other ghosts were wailing on the hillside. The man decided to go to the place where they were wailing. So, as day had come, he went thither and found some graves, one of which a wolf had dug into, so that the bones were visible, and there was a wound in the skull.

Two Faces.—Wonderful stories of beings with two faces are found among the Lakotas, as well as among the Omahas.

In the Omaha legend of Two Faces and the Twins* the pregnant mother of the Twins died as soon as she gazed at Two Faces.

In the Teton legend of He-who-Has-a-Sword and Ha-ke-la, the latter is said to have met a giant, Anung-ite, or Two Faces, who pretended to be an Indian woman nursing an infant. The infant had been stolen from its parents by the Anung-ite, who drew a rose brush across its face to make it cry. As soon as this was done the Two Faces said, in a woman's voice, "A-wo! A-wo! A-wo!" that being the expression used by Teton women when they wish to soothe crying infants.

The Indians used to hear an Anung-ite or Two Faces pass along kicking the ground. When he kicked the ground with one foot bells used to ring and an owl hooted, and when he kicked with the other it seemed as if a buffalo bull was there, snorting as he does when about to charge. At the next step a chickadee was heard, and when he moved the other foot he made all kinds of animals cry out. The Indians had heard this Anung-ite and were afraid of him. Now and then when a man who thought himself strong was alone when he met the Anung-ite the latter surprised him by catching him and throwing him into one of his ears. These ears were so large that each could hold three men. No person knew where the Anung-ite made his abode, and no one cared to follow him; no one dared to go out of doors at night. Now there was an old man and his wife who had a lodge to themselves, and their only child was a willful boy. One night he was particularly ill-behaved, and when his mother told him to do something he disobeyed her. So she said: "I will put you out of the lodge and the Anung-ite will toss you into his ear." She did not believe this, and merely said it to frighten her son into obedience. Finding him heedless, she seized his arm and, though he began to cry, pushed him out of the lodge and fastened the entrance securely. The poor boy ran crying around the lodge, but soon there was silence. The mother in turn began to cry, and went to seek him, but she did not find him outside the lodge. The next morning she and her husband, weeping, went to seek him among the people in the neighboring camp, asking every one about him, but no one had seen him. So they returned to their lodge, and they wept many days for their son. One night the mother was weeping. Suddenly she heard some one say,

* Cont. N. A. Ethnol., vol. vi, pt. i, 207-219.

“Hi! hi! You said to me: Ghost, take that one. Hi! hi!” This was said often, and she noticed a rattling of small bells as the being walked along. Just then she said: “Husband, I think now that a ghost has taken my son.” The husband said: “Yes; you gave the boy to the ghost, and, of course, the ghost took him. Why should you complain? It serves you right.” Then the mother cried aloud, so that her voice might have been heard at a distance. Then said she: “Husband, to-morrow night I will lie hid by the wood-pile, and if the ghost comes I will have a knife in my hand, and after I catch it by the leg I will call to you. Be ready to come at once. You must aid me, and I will recover my son, because I know that he threw him into his ear.” So the next night she lay in wait for the monster. By and by something was coming, crying out “Hi!” and making all kinds of birds and animals cry out as it walked. She saw a very large being come and stand by the lodge. He was very tall, his head being above the smoke-hole, down which he peeped into the lodge. Suddenly the mother called to her husband, and seized one leg of the monster with both hands. Then she and her husband gashed the legs in many places, and, after tying a thong to one leg, they pulled down the monster and bound him securely. They guarded him till it was day. Then they beheld a hideous monster covered with thick hair, except on his faces. They split his ears with a knife, and within one they found their long-lost son, who was very lean and unable to speak. He had a thick coat of long hair on him from his legs up to his head, but his head and face were smooth. And he would have become an Anung-ite had he not been rescued. He did not survive very long. After the parents had taken their son from the ear of the monster they put many sticks of wood on a fire, and on this they laid the monster. He soon was in flames, and they stood looking on. Many things were sent flying out of the fire in all directions, just like sparks. These were porcupine quills, bags, all kinds of feathers, arrows, pipes, birds, axes, war-clubs, flints, stones for sharpening knives, stone balls resembling billiard balls, necklaces of *tuki* shells, flints for striking tinder, flint hide-scrapers, whips, tobacco-pouches, all kinds of beads, etc.

Mysterious Objects.—The Lakotas regard certain small stones as mysterious, and it is said that in former days a man had one as his helper or servant. There are two kinds of these mysterious stones:

one is white, resembling ice or glass, the other resembles ordinary stones. It is said that one of them once entered a lodge and struck a man, and people spoke of the stones sending in rattles through the smoke-hole of a lodge. When anything was missed in the village the people appealed to the stones for aid, and the owner of one of the stones boiled food for a mystery feast, to which the people came. Then they told the stone of their loss, and the stone helped them. It is said that the stones brought back different messages. If any one stole the stone always revealed his name. Once the Omahas came to steal horses, but the stones knew about them and disappointed their secret plans; so that the Lakotas learned to prize the stones, and they decorated them with paint, wrapped them up, and hung a bunch of medicine with each one. Very long ago a Ree woman who had a little dog abandoned her people and went to a hill, where she sat down as women sit, and the dog lay close to her. They turned to stone, and the Rees used to go and pray to them, making them gifts of rings, bracelets, robes, and other things. And it is said that the woman and her dog remained there many winters.

Sometimes a stone, painted red all over, is laid within the lodge and hair is offered to it. In cases of sickness they pray to the stone, offering to it tobacco or various kinds of good things, and they think that the stone hears them when they sacrifice to it. As the steam arose when they made a fire on a stone, the Lakotas concluded that stones had life, the steam being their breath, and that it was impossible to kill them.

In like manner they prayed to the sun, and they thought that with his yellow eye he saw all things, and that when he desired he went under the ground. They prayed also to trees, because it was said long ago that one sang at intervals. A man reported this, and from that time they have been regarded as mysterious. Bogs are mysterious. There are various strange objects covered with thick hair which remain at the bottom of a bog. They have no eyes, but they are able to devour anything, and from their bodies water is ever flowing. When one of these beings wishes he reclines under ground at another place; then there is no water issuing from the place where he used to lie, but a spring starts up in the new resting-place. The water is warm in the winter, but as cold as ice in summer; and before one dares to drink of it he prays to the water, as he does not wish to bring illness on himself by his irreverence. In

the olden days one of these strange beings was pulled up out of a bog and carried to camp, where a special tent was erected for him. But water flowed all around him, which drowned almost all of the people. Then the survivors offered him food, which he held as he sat motionless gazing at them. It disappeared before they were aware of it, though they did not see him eat it.

Weather Spirit.—The Tetons say that a giant, called Waziya, knows when there is to be a change of weather. When he travels his footprints are large enough for several Indians to stand in when they are abreast, and his strides are very far apart, for at one step he can go over a hill. When it is cold, the people say, "Waziya has returned." They used to pray to him, but when they found that he did not heed them they desisted. When warm weather is to follow Waziya wraps himself up in a thick robe, and when it is to be cold he goes nude. The members of the He-yo-ka, or Anti-natural Society, love the acts of Waziya; so they imitate him in always doing or saying the opposite of what might be expected under the circumstances.

Guardian Spirits.—Each Teton may have his special guardian spirit. If such spirits are remembered they confer great power on their favorites. The latter may be surrounded by foes and yet escape, either by receiving great strength, enabling them to scatter their enemies, or by being made invisible, disappearing like a ghost or the wind. Sometimes it is said that one is rescued by being turned into a small bird that flies off in safety.

Ordeals or Modes of Swearing.—While there are no oaths or curses as we have them, Tetons can invoke higher powers. Thus one may say: The Thunderers hear me, and if he is lying the Thunderers or one of their number will be sure to kill him. Sometimes the man will put a knife in his mouth, and then if he lies he will be stuck by a knife thereafter, and death must follow. Or, he will say, "The horse heard me," knowing that the penalty for falsehood will be certain death from a horse that will throw him and break his neck. When one says, "The Earth hears me," and he lies, he is sure to die miserably in a short time, and his family will also be afflicted. If any object is regarded as wakan or mysterious they never speak lightly of it; its name is revered. They respect and honor their gods.

Omens—Bodily Omens.—Ringin in one ear signifies one of two things. Some one will come without his family, and he must be entertained, or you will hear news. The direction whence the person or news will come is shown by the ear that is affected.

If the eye twitches involuntarily some one will weep. If any other part of the body twitches involuntarily some one will hit the person there or he will be stabbed or shot there. If the palm of the hand twitches often he will soon strike some one, or else he will become angry. (When a woman has a son sick somewhere, or if he has been killed on the way home, her breasts are often very painful).

If one sneezes once his special friend or fellow, his son or his wife has named him; so the sneezer calls out, "My son." If he sneezes twice he exclaims, "My son and his mother!"

Animal Omens.—When whippoorwills sing together at night, saying, "Hohi", hohi", one says in reply, "No." Should the birds stop at once it is a sign that the answering person must die soon. But if the birds continue singing the man will live a long time.

The ungnaghichala (Gray Screech Owl) foretells cold weather. The Indians say that they are able to catch them in this manner: When a man sees one of these owls he closes his fingers and then opens them towards the bird, making it close its eyes and sit motionless. But should the man go after the owl without closing his fingers it is sure to fly off. When the night is to be very cold this owl cries out just as if one's teeth chattered, so the Tetons say. When its cry is heard all the people wrap up in their thickest robes and put plenty of wood on the fire. The ski-bi-bi-la is a small gray bird, with a black head, spotted here and there on the breast. It dwells in forests, and is said to answer people. When this bird says, "Gli hun-wo?" people know that the spring is near and they rejoice. When a boy hears this bird ask the question he runs to his mother and learns from her that he must reply, "No; it has not yet returned." The reason for this reply has not been learned. When the people first hear the cry of the night-hawk in the spring they begin to talk of going buffalo hunting, because when the night-hawks return the buffalo have become fat again and the night-hawks bring the news, for they never cry in vain.

There are many societies of birds, each having its peculiar dancers. The prairie chickens dance after rain in places where there is plenty of pe-zhi sha-sha, a tall reddish kind of grass. They

assemble, and one goes around the circle thrice, making a humming noise with the tail feathers, then she (sic!) stands in the middle of the ring dancing and saying, "O! O! O!" Then all dance. When they stop another goes around the circle thrice, and so on as before. This dance lasts about two hours. Meadow larks imitate the sun-dance. They do not dance together in a ring, but one bird at a time.

Etiquette.—A man cannot look his mother-in-law in the face, nor can his brother do so, and she cannot gaze at them. The man who lives with his wife's kindred is called wi-cha wo-kha, *a buried man*, and the woman who lives with her husband's kindred is *a buried woman*. If a man notices his mother-in-law he must put his robe over his head as well as his shoulders and pass by on the other side of the road; also he must sit on the other side of the lodge.

Young girls who are the wife's relations seize the mother-in-law and try to make her look at her son-in-law, and some seize him.

In like manner the woman dare not look at or address her husband's father. But the Omahas have a curious mode of evading the prohibition. The grandfather will say to his grandchild, in the presence of the women, "Tell your mother so and so," even when the child is too young to speak or understand what is said. Or the mother may address a child when she intends the question or message for her husband's father.

There seems to be a custom forbidding the man to speak directly to his wife's father. The writer was amused by a message sent to Louis Sanssouci, the Omaha interpreter, in 1879, by his son-in-law who was absent from the reservation. The writer knew that his father-in-law would get the letter, yet he addressed his own child, who could not read, asking him to make certain inquiries of his grandfather, Sanssouci.

If the man laughs at what his mother-in-law says or she laughs at him, or if a male cousin laughs at his female cousin, or *vice versa*, the law of politeness is broken, and the offender can be punished by tickling or by scratching his ears, and when that is not done his head is pulled down and he is hit on the back with the fist. The female offender is also thus punished.

Ideas about Children.—Twins are a mystery to the Tetons, who say that they are of superhuman origin, and must come from Twin-

land. As they are not human beings, they must be treated very politely and tenderly, lest they should become offended and die in order to return to Twin-land. When a child is able to walk they say he kicks out the teeth of his elder brother or sister. The teeth of the elder brother or sister which have been shed, probably the first set, are buried under the entrance to the lodge so that other teeth may come in their place. Whoever steps over the spot where the teeth have been buried will soon have other teeth in his mouth.

HOW TO STRAIGHTEN A SPEAR SHAFT.—The Lencas, living in northern Honduras, have an ingenious way of straightening a spear shaft. They select a reed or pole of the required length and thickness, say about 16 feet long. They then tie one end of a lariat to the limb of a tree 20 feet from the ground. Near this fastening two half hitches are taken around one end of the pole or reed. Two other half hitches are made around the lower end of the pole, care being taken that the strip of line between the two double hitches shall be loose. A great stone weighing 50 pounds or more is hung to the lariat just below the lower end of the pole or reed. This weight holds the shaft as straight as possible while it is seasoning. After it is thoroughly dried it will not resume its former crooks.

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MUSIC IN HONDURAS.—The Lencas have a stringed instrument called a bumbum. It is a bow strung. Near one end a cord is attached to the bow-string and drawn inward so as practically to make two strings. This short cord passes through a small gourd on the back of the bow and holds it there. The effect of this gourd is to give resonance. Frequently a larger half-gourd is inverted on the ground, and the lower end of the instrument rests on this while it is being played.

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